



Dainty Swallowtail, *Papilio anactus*.
Photo: Cathrine Harboe-Ree

Cover photo for our new Butterfly brochure

The Butterflies have landed!

2026 is the 50th anniversary of the Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club and your committee has been looking at ways to celebrate this achievement.

For much of the past year a small group of dedicated club members has been working behind the scenes to produce the club's latest brochure – "Butterflies of the Mount Alexander Region". This brochure is in the same format as our popular "Indigenous Plants of Castlemaine and Surrounds" which is now in its 3rd edition.

Back in 2022 when we updated the club website we found that we had images for most of the 49 species of butterfly found in our region which includes Mount Alexander Shire and the eastern half of Hepburn Shire. This region is the catchment area for the majority of our members. Since 2022, two additional species have been recorded in the region.

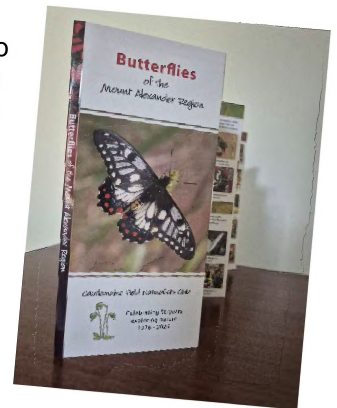
This brochure includes 48 of the 51 species that we feature on the website. Those that were omitted are rare in our region. Twelve

photographers kindly provided local images for the brochure. The images are chosen to show each butterfly as it will most commonly be observed in the field. At the same time they attempt to show key features that help with identification. In most cases there is only one image per butterfly although there are a few exceptions. There are two images for the Common Brown, *Heteronympha merope*, where the male and female are distinctly different in pattern and size (female is larger). There are a few cases where we show both the top and underside of the wings. All butterflies differ in this respect however it was not possible to show all species this way.

Meanwhile our project team put together the text along with Elaine Bayes who provided the text for the Eltham Copper Butterfly. The brochure text also gives a brief summary of the life cycle of butterflies as well as some tips for photographing butterflies and for a butterfly friendly garden. There is also

an attempt to answer the age-old question, what is the difference between a butterfly and a moth?

Special thanks go to Lou Citroën who led the project and who was ably assisted by Kerrie Jennings and Rosemary Turner.



Patrick Kavanagh will officially launch the brochure at our February meeting (see Coming Events in this newsletter), our first event to mark our 50th anniversary, so come along and get your copy. After the launch, the brochure will be available for sale from the Castlemaine Visitor Information Centre with bulk orders directly from the club.

Euan Moore

The Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung community as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Country where we meet and study the natural environment. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and future.

Excursion to Rock of Ages, 13th December 2025

Our final excursion for 2025 was to the Rock of Ages, Mt Moorul, overlooking Maldon. The group met briefly at the start of the Rock of Ages Track to allow for additional car-pooling before we drove to the summit. Here there were many tors and rock faces and we were rewarded with impressive views of the surrounding countryside. Mt Moorul/Rock-of-Ages is on the metamorphic junction of sandstone and granitic rocks. This geology has created a unique, for our area, habitat for several species of plant including the endangered/restricted range Flat-leaf Bush-pea, *Pultenaea platyphylla*,

which only occurs around Maldon, in the Warby Ranges and near Beechworth, and the Rock Correa, *Correa glabra*.

In spite of the warm, dry conditions we managed to find an impressive number of plants, still in flower although at the end of their flowering season for most. Most exciting were the last remaining flower spikes of the Bristled Rustyhood, *Pterostylis biseta*, that were reported in our December 2025 Newsletter. The Yellowish Bluebell, *Wahlenbergia luteola*, was also flowering. This is a grassland species that is not common in our

region. It was disappointing to find significant numbers of African Weed Orchid, *Disa bracteata*, which is becoming more common and spreading across Victoria.

The weather on the day limited the number of animals that were recorded. Amongst the insects were 3 species of butterfly and a Red Jewel Bug, *Choerocoris paganus*. The heat and wind meant that only 5 species of bird were recorded, mainly via their calls.

Euan Moore

Rock of Ages Plant List

Ferns	Magnoliopsida (cont.)
<i>Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia</i> , Rock Fern	<i>Gonocarpus elatus</i> , Tall Raspwort
<i>Asplenium subglandulosum</i> , Blanket Fern	<i>Eucalyptus</i> sp.
Liliopsida (Monocotyledons)	<i>Exocarpos cupressiformis</i> , Cherry Ballart
<i>Austrostipa scabra</i> ssp. <i>falcata</i> , Rough Spear-grass	<i>Stackhousia monogyna</i> , Creamy Candles
<i>Austrostipa</i> sp., Spear-grass	<i>Euphorbia drummondii</i> , Flat Spurge (low, small, mat-forming)
<i>Rytidosperma</i> sp., Wallaby Grass	<i>Dodoniaea viscosa</i> subsp. <i>angustissima</i> , Slender Hop-bush
* <i>Brisa maxima</i> , Quaking-grass	<i>Correa glabra</i> , Rock Correa
* <i>Brisa minor</i> , Lesser Quaking-grass	<i>Oxalis</i> sp.
<i>Arthropodium strictum</i> , Chocolate Lily	<i>Geranium species 5</i> , Geranium (stems with backward pointing hairs)
<i>Arthropodium fimbriatum</i> , Nodding Chocolate Lily	<i>Pelargonium rodneyanum</i> , Magenta cranesbill
<i>Tricoryne elatior</i> , Yellow Rush-lily	* <i>Erodium botrys</i> , Long Heron's-bill
<i>Pterostylis biseta</i> , Bristled Rustyhood (possibly <i>Pt. sp. aff. biseta</i> 'Maldon' or a sub-species)	<i>Erodium crinitum</i> , Blue Heron's-bill
* <i>Disa bracteata</i> , African Weed Orchid	* <i>Erodium moschatum</i> , Musky Heron's-bill
<i>Microtis unifolia</i> , Common Onion Orchid	<i>Hydrocotyle laxiflora</i> , Stinking Pennywort
<i>Lomandra</i> sp., Mat rush	* <i>Centaurium erythraea/tenuiflorum</i> , Common/* Slender Centaury (possibly both)
Magnoliopsida (Dicotyledons)	<i>Convolvulus angustissimus</i> , Pink Bindweed
<i>Clematis microphylla</i> var. <i>microphylla</i> , Small-leaved Clematis	* <i>Marrubium vulgare</i> , Horehound
<i>Ptilotus spathulatus</i> , Pussy tails	<i>Wahlenbergia stricta</i> , Bluebell
<i>Stellaria pungens</i> , Prickly Starwort	<i>Wahlenbergia luteola</i> , Yellowish Bluebell
* <i>Hypericum perforatum</i> , St John's Wort	<i>Lithotoma axillaris</i> , Rock Isotome
<i>Lysimachia arvensis</i> , Scarlet Pimpernel	<i>Vittadinia cuneata</i> , New Holland Daisy
* <i>Rosa rubiginosa</i> , Briar Rose	<i>Chrysocephalum apiculatum</i> , Common Everlasting
<i>Acacia mearnsii</i> , Black Wattle	<i>Xerochrysum viscosum</i> , Sticky Everlasting
<i>Acacia paradoxa</i> , Hedge Wattle	* <i>Arctotheca calendula</i> , Capeweed
<i>Acacia implexa</i> , Lightwood	<i>Triptilodiscus pygmaeus</i> , Austral Sunray
* <i>Trifolium arvense</i> , Hare's-foot Clover	* <i>Carduus pycnocephalus</i> , Slender Thistle
* <i>Trifolium campestre</i> , Hop Clover	<i>Senecio glomeratus</i> , Annual Fireweed
<i>Pultenaea platyphylla</i> , Flat-leaf Bush-pea (En)	<i>Senecio quadridentatus</i> , Cotton Fireweed

* Introduced

Rock of Ages Fauna List

Birds	<i>Helicoverpa punctigera</i> , Native Budworm
Australian Magpie	<i>Hippodamia variegata</i> , Spotted Amber Ladybird
Common Blackbird	Pintail Beetle (unidentified)
Grey Shrikethrush	<i>Bathypogon</i> sp., Robber Fly
Superb Fairywren	<i>Psaltoda moerens</i> , Red-eye Cicada (shell only)
White-winged Chough	<i>Choerocoris paganus</i> , Red Jewel-bug
Insects	<i>Nysius vinitor</i> , Rutherglen Bug
<i>Heteronympha merope</i> , Common Brown	<i>Oedaleus australis</i> ? Grasshopper
<i>Papilio anactus</i> , Dainty Swallowtail	<i>Lioponera</i> sp., Ant (wandering queen)
<i>Zizina otis</i> ssp. <i>labradus</i> , Common Grass-blue	<i>Helicoverpa punctigera</i> , Native Budworm

You can see photos of some of our observations at <https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/observations?lat=-36.974155563480814&lng=144.06038532829322&on=2025-12-13&radius=0.2415359752233504>



Rock Correa, *Correa glabra*.
Photo: Euan Moore



Red Jewel-bug, *Choerocoris paganus*.
Photo: Mez Woodward



Rock Isotome, *Lithotoma axillaris*, growing on granitic soils. Photo: Jenny Rolland



Pussy tails, *Ptilotus spathulatus*.
Photo: Euan Moore

End-of-year Members' Night Report

At our December meeting last year, we were treated to a smorgasbord of short presentations on members' nature highlights for the year. There was a wide range of topics but each with their own special interest. A summary of these presentations and selection of photos follow. All photos are by the presenters.

Lou Citroën posed the puzzling story of why his backyard Pardalotes had abandoned their nest preparation activities despite successfully rearing young the previous two years. First the Spotted Pardalotes and then the Striated Pardalotes worked on a burrow in the garden bed but then left, the Striated Pardalotes moving to explore another nesting option in the base of a hanging basket only to again discontinue with nest building. Lou queried whether lack of food might be a factor, noting decreased lerp presence.



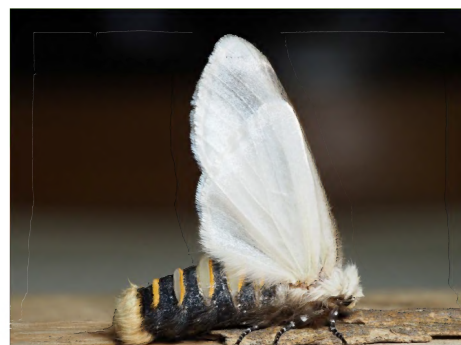
The male Spotted Pardalote makes a start on a new burrow near the old one from last year which had collapsed due to rain.



After being "booted" out of the garden burrow, the Striated Pardalotes get started in preparing a nest inside a hanging basket.

Dennis Hurley had also observed fewer spiders, hover flies and other insects on the yellow paper daisies in his garden.

Jill Williams showed us some of her favourite moths, in particular a recently emerged Boisduval Autumn Moth that she rescued from a bucket of water (left) and watched as it dried out and unfurled its "sails" (right).



Lord Howe Island Woodhen, *Tricholimnas sylvestris*, whose numbers have dramatically increased following the successful rodent eradication program.

Cathrine Harboe-Ree gave us a wonderful overview of the diverse bird communities of Lord Howe Island. With a history of extinction of several species since human settlement, there are now intensive programs to restore threatened populations by pest eradication and biosecurity control.

However an increasing problem is the ingestion of plastic debris from the ocean by seabirds such as shearwaters, leading to a high mortality of the young. Teams of volunteers patrol the beaches for these birds, helping them to regurgitate the plastic.



The beautiful White Tern, *Gygis alba*, lays its single egg in an indentation on a branch, commonly a Norfolk Island Pine.

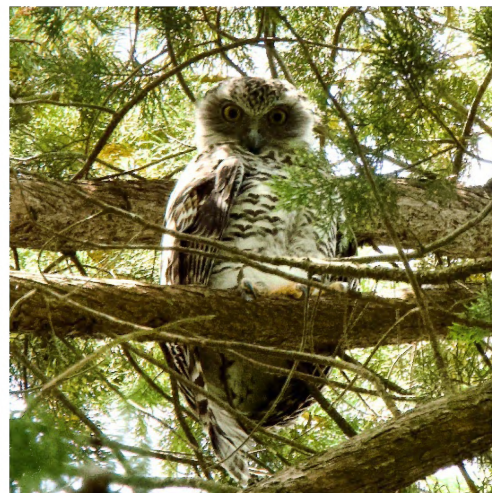
Judith Nimmo posed a question as to what caused the multiple deformities on the leaves of a Eucalypt. The audience offered that they were galls, probably containing the larvae of a wasp or other insect.



Peter Turner presented a heartening series of photos and the timeline for the successful rearing of another Powerful Owl chick last year in the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens.



1st August, 2 days after first appearing from the nest hollow.



24th November. Adult plumage developing.

Noel Young showed his photographic skills with a series of stunning and interesting photographs of birds seen in Brisbane parks and gardens on his recent trip up north.



A Great Egret catches a dragonfly



Osprey on phone tower nest.



A male Scarlet Honeyeater (Myzomela)

Again up north, this time in the Atherton Tableland, **Euan and I** searched for the Golden Bowerbird and his enormous bower.

The Golden Bowerbird is the smallest of Australia's Bowerbirds but with the largest bower – up to 3m tall! The bower has 2 columns of sticks joined at the base, built around vertical saplings.

Deep in the forest, we had success.

Our final presentation was by **Geoff Harris** who held us spellbound as he sang a song to capture the essence of our club's activities over the year. [Here are the words of his song.](#)

Jenny Rolland



The Golden Bowerbird bower – about 1.3m high! Between the stick columns is a display perch decorated with lichen.



The male Golden Bowerbird arrives, feeding on a native fig.

Geraldine Harris

While I did know that emu feathers have two shafts (double-plumed) growing from one follicle, I had never noticed that their feathers have dark tips or thought about why, until I read the quiz in a recent VNPA (Vic. National Parks Association) magazine.

Q. What job do the black tips on an emu's feathers have in hot weather?

A. They absorb the heat radiating from the sun. The bulk of the greyish brown parts underneath the tips help prevent heat transfer to the emu's skin. Wind can then blow the heat away as the bird moves.

Apparently these specialised feathers provide excellent insulation against heat and cold; they also help to keep the emu hydrated and provide camouflage and predator deterrence through the rattling sound they make. Cassowaries have the same sort of feather structure.



Annual Challenge Bird Count – 2025 results

By Chris Timewell

Once again, the Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club contributed to the Annual Challenge Bird Count. This event, conducted under the auspices of BirdLife Australia, involves teams from across Australia attempting to detect as many birds as possible from within their local area, during a single day near to the first weekend in December. For the Castlemaine area, the sightings must be made within a 25km radius of the central township. And for a bird to be a legitimate record, it must be either seen by 2 or more people, or heard by 3 or more people.

Due to unforeseen circumstances necessitating some late withdrawals, there were only two main groups representing Castlemaine in 2025. The 'Harris' group – comprising Geraldine and Geoff Harris, and Lawrie Conole - visited many of the Harris's standard sites from previous years in the Muckleford forest area, as well as new sites in Muckleford, Castlemaine and Barkers Creek. Sue Boekel – a member of BirdLife Castlemaine and a regular contributor to the Challenge Count over recent years – led a team of three across at least 11 sites including Malmsbury, Elphinstone, Railway dam, Newstead Cemetery and forested areas near Welshmans Reef and the Nuggettys.

Lisa Minchin and I visited the Castlemaine Sewerage Ponds as our small contribution to the count – not being aware that the Harris group also visited this site. Therefore, for the

results at the sewerage ponds, the count for each bird species was taken as being the highest tally recorded by either the Timewell or Harris group.

You can see a comprehensive list of the birds detected in the Castlemaine area in 2025 compared with past years as well as reports from Castlemaine Field Naturalists involvement in the Challenge Count on the club's website (<https://castlemainefieldnaturalists.org.au/challenge-bird-count-2023/>). All results are also lodged with BirdLife Australia.

Our combined contribution in 2025 involved the detection of 1422 individual birds from 110 different species. Given the small number of groups involved in 2025, this compares very favourably with the 2024 results (1572 individual birds from 110 different species) and the 2023 results (1574 individual birds from 108 species). The newly added bird hide at the Castlemaine sewerage ponds was a significant contributor to the overall total (33 species and 295 individual birds).

Some of the highlights from 2025 included Spotted Quail-thrush and White-winged Triller near Sawmill Rd, Black-tailed Native-hen at the Castlemaine sewerage ponds, two Musk Duck in the golf course ponds, Southern Whiteface at the Newstead Cemetery, Purple-crowned Lorikeets in Elphinstone, and Satin Flycatcher near Green Gully. Evidence of

breeding was noted for the Eurasian Coot, Australasian Grebe and Wedge-tailed Eagle.

Most of the expected bird species for our local area were detected by one or more of the groups. Some of the species considered to be notable omissions include Rock Dove, Great Cormorant, Brown Falcon, White-naped Honeyeater, Yellow Thornbill, Striated Thornbill, Varied Sittella, Golden Whistler, Silvereye, and Common Starling.



Two Wedge-tailed Eagles on their massive nest, seen on the Challenge Bird Count.
Photo: Geraldine Harris.

Keep this event in your diary for the weekend of 5-6 December 2026. We'd love to have you involved. All abilities and experience levels are welcomed.

January Observations



White's Skink, *Liopholis whitii*. The Monk.
Photo: Euan Moore

Sadly, January was dominated by the devastating bushfires in Victoria and in particular for our club, the local Harcourt region. Several of our members were impacted. Geoff and Geraldine Harris had about 400 acres (162 ha) of bush on their 500 acre property burnt, but fortunately with no loss of their house. Here Geoff shares some images of the stark reality of the immediate aftermath of a bushfire, something he and Geraldine are already well familiar with from their Grampians property. We wish them and all those impacted, support and encouragement in the repair of their beautiful properties that they had nurtured so well for many years.



Burnt woodland – ground cover charred, old habitat trees felled, nest boxes incinerated.



Remains of Tall Sedge, *Carex appressa*, near creek – hope for regrowth?



Burnt animals found around the property included this Krefft's Glider (left) and bird nestlings (right). Others included a large Eastern Brown Snake, both Ringtail and Brushtail possums, Eastern Grey Kangaroos.



Swamp Wallaby survivor

Fortunately, some vegetation and some nest boxes near the house survived.

Up to 36 bird species have been coming into the bird baths since the fire, and here (right), a Swamp Wallaby also enjoys a bird bath on a hot day with a little Pardalote (on the left of the bowl). Photo: Geraldine Harris.

Geoff tells us that their Grampians property is looking fantastic with a wonderful spring wildflower show again, two years after the bushfire there. A message of hope!



Small Heroes by Mez Woodward

At the end of December, I watched this little Eastern Spinebill build her nest, her mate assisting with building materials, including carefully teased out strands of old hay-band. Her site of choice was a *Leptospermum*, a favourite nesting shrub here for Eastern Spinebills. She had built surprisingly close to the top which meant less leafy shade cover and more visibility for aerial predators. Also, this bush was in a particularly windy spot on the ridge, and when early January brought some very strong winds it seemed impossible that the nest could survive. Yet again and again I watched the tiny drama of her sitting deep in the nest and riding it out as the branches were violently thrashed back and forth.

Then came January 9, with its catastrophic fire rating, excessive temperatures and fierce winds. It was 30 degrees here by 9 am and the little bird was clearly stressed, her beak continually gaped as she sat on the nest. By lunchtime the Ravenswood fires had started and by mid-afternoon the temperature had reached 42 degrees. But she still left the nest only occasionally for water.

By evening the winds had pushed the Ravenswood fires to Harcourt and the Harcourt Valley and they were fast heading for the Mount Alexander Regional Park. By later evening we humans had filled up the horse water troughs and the bird baths and evacuated. The Spinebill didn't. She

just continued her life's work of raising her young.

Over the next several days the CFA and Forest Fire Management continued their beyond amazing work to contain the fire. For the Spinebill these days were gentler, but she continued to have the nightly vigil of looking across the valley to watch the flames on Mount Alexander slowly moving southwards, devouring large tracts of the mountain and its habitat. I wondered what her perception and experience of that might have been?

PS Update from Mez: "The survival miracle continues and nestling/s are being fed. Can't observe how many yet."



Photos by Mez Woodward

Orchid News by Russell Stanley

Some of our previously unnamed Leek Orchids have finally received their official title. In particular, for the Castlemaine area we have the newly named *Paraprasophyllum medianum* (A.K.A. *Prasophyllum medianum*) that grows around Chewton. Common name = Midland Leek Orchid.

The “type specimen location” for this newly named species is Dingo Park Rd. Chewton.

The name of this Leek Orchid and several others was recently published in the paper:

Characterisation of Paraprasophyllum patens (R.Br.) M.A.Clem & D.L.Jones, *P. odoratum* (R.S. Rogers) M.A.Clem & D.L.Jones and *P. spicatum* (R.J. Bates & D.L. Jones) M.A.Clem & D.L.Jones (Diurideae: Prasophyllinae), and the description of 27 new species in the *P. patens*/*P. odoratum*/*P. spicatum* complex from eastern Australia. David L. Jones

This article appeared in the recently available: Australian Orchid Research Volume 7, 2025



Midland Leek Orchid, *Paraprasophyllum medianum* flowering at Chewton in November 2022. Photo by Russell Stanley.

Australian regulator of rat baits fails to protect owls

Last May, we alerted readers of the threat of SGAR (Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticide) poisons to owls and other wildlife, urging members to use safer poisons if any. [A link to our notice](#) with details on SGARs as well as safer poisons is on the home page of our website. The club wrote to our local stockists urging them to remove these dangerous products from their shelves.

Just before Christmas, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) released the outcome of its long-running review into SGARs, drawing on more than 1,500 scientific studies. They concluded that the current controls are failing to prevent unacceptable harm to wildlife and propose several changes to the regulations.

However, Birdlife Australia finds that the proposed changes do not address the harm to wildlife. “The APVMA want to continue to sell unlimited amounts of these long-lasting poisons to the general public- just in smaller packages with different fine print. It’s nonsensical. The only safe solution is to remove all SGAR products from public sale. Safer alternatives and integrated pest management should be the new standard, in line with other nations around the world.”

The APVMA currently has a consultation process open for public submission by **16 March 2026**. The Birdlife Australia website provides a [scorecard](#) on the proposed changes and offers a [submission tool](#) to help you take action.



Powerful Owl in the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens. Photo: Peter Turner

From the Committee

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to all those affected by the recent horrific fires, with devastating loss of property, livestock, native bushland and wildlife. The distressing start to the year highlights the need for us all to understand and care for our natural environment. We encourage everybody to renew their membership and participate in our informative and engaging programme of activities.

Membership Fees for 2026 (due 1st April)

The Committee is recommending that membership fees are unchanged again this year. The following motion will be put to members at the February meeting: "That membership fees for 2025 remain the same as for 2024: Single membership \$35, Family \$50, Pensioner/Student/Single Concession \$25, Family/Pensioner/ Student/Concession \$30"

Please note that if you paid your fees in the last quarter of 2025 your membership is current to the end of 2026.

The CFNC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held on Friday 13th March at 7.30 pm before the usual monthly meeting and a celebration of our 50th anniversary. All positions on the committee will be open, so you are encouraged to consider joining the committee. Members with a range of skills and interests are welcome. Members considering nominating for the committee are encouraged to contact the President or one of the committee members (details on the back page of this newsletter). The [Nomination form](#) is included with this newsletter and will be available at the February and March meetings.

Cathrine Harboe-Ree, Secretary

CFNC turns 50 this year!

As part of our celebration of the Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club's 50 years, committee members are keen to receive and record in suitable ways any memories of highlights of your time as a member of the club that you would like to share. These could range from finding a species new to you during an excursion; an "ah ha" moment during an expert guest speaker's presentation; a camp exploring nature in an area new to you and photos of memorable plants, animals or events. We will allow some time at each meeting this year to reflect on our past.

Please email your memories as notes and/or photos to Peter Turner (munrods1@iinet.net.au). Over the course of the year we will update the History section on the club website, first prepared some years ago by George Broadway, and all written and photographic notes will be stored in the club's online archive.

At our March monthly meeting, which is also our AGM and the date of our inauguration 50 years ago, we will celebrate the anniversary with a birthday cake.

SEANA Spring camp, Castlemaine: 9-11 October, 2026

Mark your diary!

Our club will be hosting the Spring 2026 SEANA weekend over the second weekend in October - Friday 9th to Sunday 11th. A program full of interesting and varied excursions and excellent guest speakers is in preparation. Those of you who attended the 2019 gathering here will know that there will be many tasks during the weekend – so we will be calling for volunteers after Easter.

Coming Events in February

Monthly Meeting: Friday 13th February, 7.30pm Uniting Church Fellowship Room, Lyttleton St.

Guest speaker, Patrick Kavanagh “Intriguing invertebrates and concerning trends”.

Patrick will first launch our new “Butterflies of the Mount Alexander Region” brochure

Patrick has lived in a patch of box woodland at Strangways for 30 years. He uses macrophotography to discover the tiny invertebrate life that makes the local ecosystem work. Following the brochure launch, Patrick will share some of the intriguing discoveries he’s made in his yard with a camera and an internet connection. He will also talk about some concerning trends in our invertebrate populations over the past few years and how these trends affect other species.

Observations: Members and visitors are invited to share their recent interesting observations at the meeting. Please email any photos as uncropped JPEG file(s) and supporting notes to Jill Williams (jilliwill33@gmail.com) by noon on the day of the meeting.

Excursion: Saturday 14th February, 1.30pm

“Baringhup, Loddon River.”

Leader: Euan Moore

We will have an easy walk along a track on the bank of the Loddon River, enjoying the shade of the large old River Red Gums and other riparian vegetation. We should see and hear quite a few species of water birds and bush birds as we make our way along to some mini-rapids and, time permitting, the Cairn Curran Reservoir spillway. Return to the cars for a picnic afternoon tea.

Meet: for car-pooling and **1.30pm** departure at the northern end of the Car Park north of the Railway Goods Shed, Kennedy St. Castlemaine. Or meet at **2.00pm** at the Loddon River, Baringhup. Coming from Maldon, turn left off the Baringhup Rd at Mitchell St (a dirt track) just before the Loddon River bridge, parking about 150m along the track, on the opposite bank to the Caravan Park, near some picnic tables ([see Google maps](#)).

Bring: water, snacks, **clean** sturdy shoes, chairs, afternoon tea.

Roadside Clean-up, Monday 16th February, 9.00am

The first of our four checks for the year of a stretch of the Pyrenees Highway

Join us to check a section of the Pyrenees Highway, west of Castlemaine from the top of McKenzie’s Hill to Woodman’s Road. Many hands make light work as we enjoy a pleasant walk along some interesting roadside bush and do our bit for the community.

Meet: 9am near Tait’s Decorative Iron, corner of Willy Milly Rd and Pyrenees Highway, Castlemaine.

Bring: Gloves, water, sturdy footwear. Garbage bags and safety vests supplied.

Contact: Geoff Harris (mob 0418 392 183) if you can help with the clean-up.



Wire-leaf Mistletoe, *Amyema preissii*.
Leanganook Track, Forest Creek.
Photo: Jenny Rolland

Program

Meetings: 7.30pm, 2nd Friday of the month except for January.

Venue: Uniting Church Hall (UCH), Lyttleton Street, Castlemaine except during winter (June-August) when they are held by Zoom.

Excursions are held on the Saturday following the monthly meeting and leave from the northern end of the car park north of the Railway Goods Shed, Kennedy St. at 1.30pm unless stated otherwise.

See “Coming Events” page for details on February activities.

Fri 13th February, 7.30pm

Meeting (UCH) “Intriguing invertebrates and concerning trends”

Speaker: Patrick Kavanagh and launch of our new butterfly brochure.

Sat 14th February, 1.30pm

Excursion: “Baringhup, Loddon River”

Leader: Euan Moore

Mon 16th February, 9am.

Roadside clean-up.

Meet Tait’s Decorative Iron, corner Willy Milly Rd and Pyrenees Highway.

Fri 13th March, 7.30pm

Meeting (UCH) AGM

“50th Anniversary celebration”

Sat 14th March, 1.30pm

Excursion: “Tullaroop Reservoir”

Leaders: Euan Moore, Jenny Rolland

Visitors are welcome at club activities

SOUTH EAST AUSTRALIAN NATURALISTS’ ASSOCIATION

Autumn camp: 27-29 March 2026, hosted by Geelong FNC

Registrations due **6th February**

[Information](#) and [registration](#) form are on our website

Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club Inc. #A0003010B

castlemainefieldnaturalists.org.au

castlemainefnc@hotmail.com

PO Box 324, Castlemaine, 3450

Membership – fees due 1st April

Includes the monthly newsletter, Castlemaine Naturalist.

(Membership forms on [CFNC website](#))

Single \$35, Family \$50

Pensioner or student:

Single \$25, Family \$30

Newsletter: Castlemaine Naturalist

Email items: newsletter.cfnc@gmail.com

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